

**JOHN HEJDUK:**  
**THE RIGA PROJECT**

The University of the Arts

This project, jointly organized by the Exhibitions Program and Department of Architectural Studies of The University of the Arts, was supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and with contributions from Realty Engineering Associates, Berwyn, Pennsylvania, Laurie Wagman and Irvin J. Borowsky, Philadelphia, and The Andrew Corporation, Orland Park, Illinois

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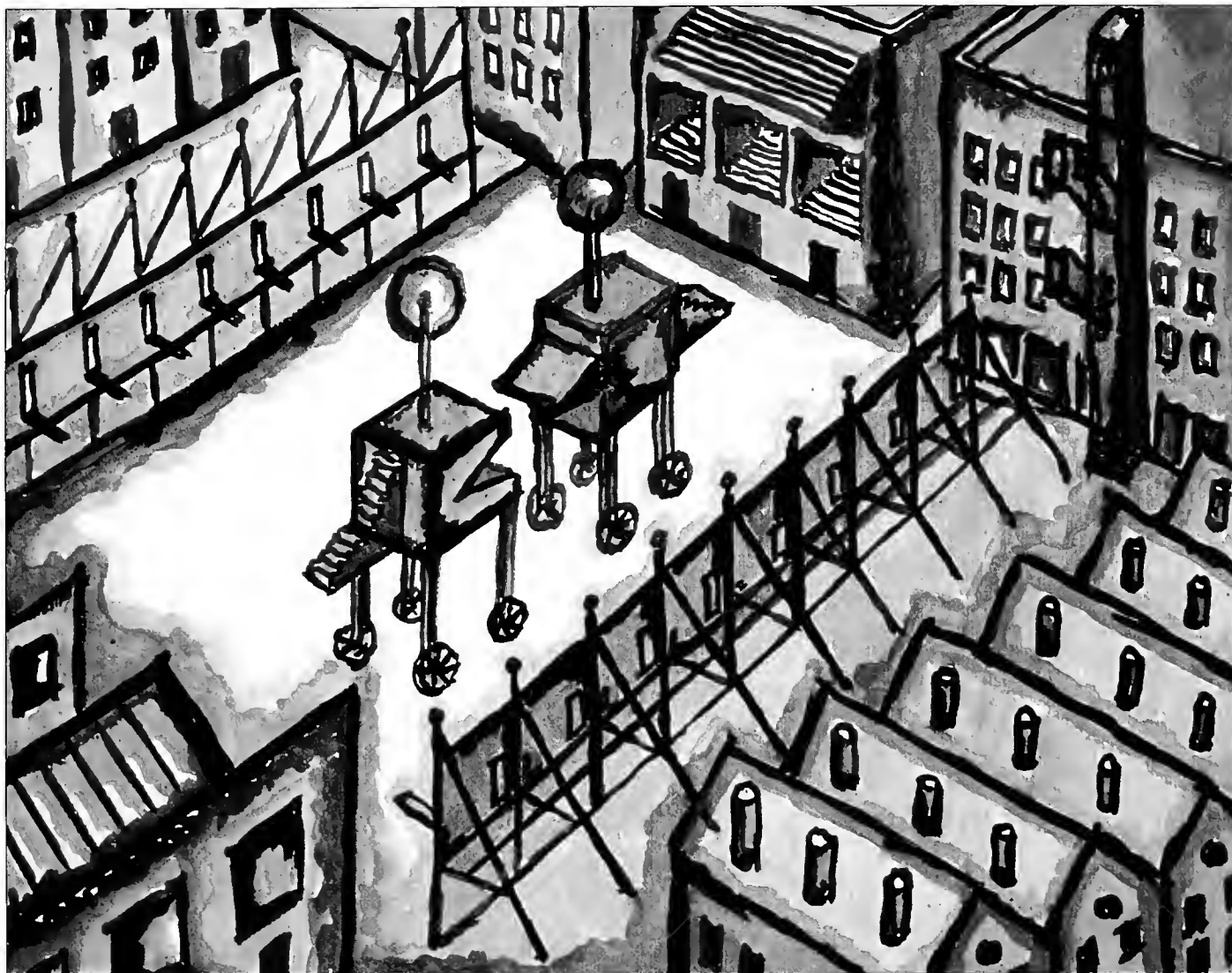
November 20–  
December 22, 1987



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The University of the Arts

The Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery  
and The Great Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



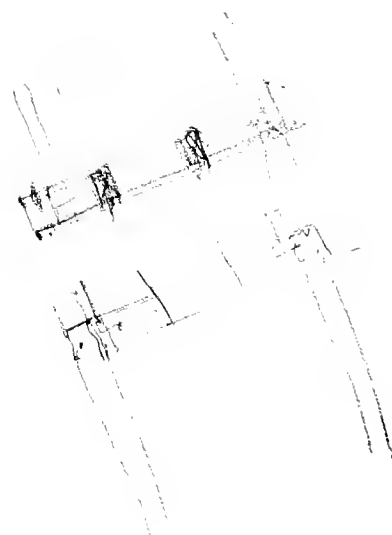
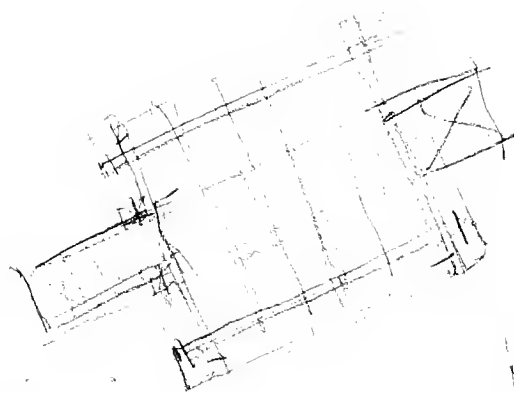
John Hejduk  
Object/Subject, from the RIGA book  
watercolor on paper, 1985  
8 1/4" x 10 1/2"  
Photo: Kim Shkapich

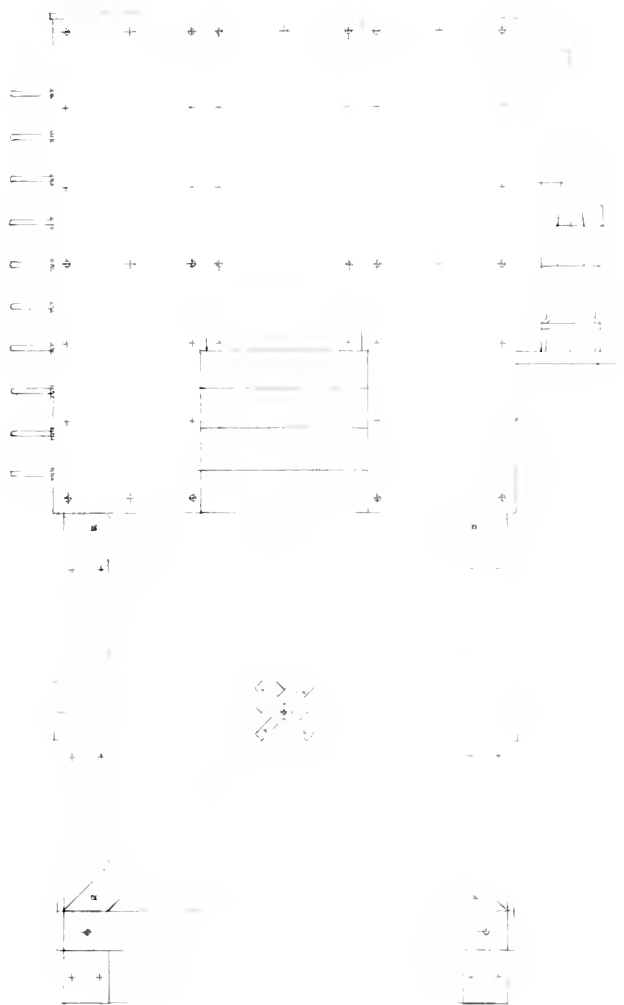
## THE HESITATION OF ORPHEUS

John Hejduk

AS THE SNOW  
DESCENDED  
IT TURNED TO  
BLOOD  
DURING THE NIGHT  
TRANSFORMING  
THE RIVER TO THE  
COLOR  
OF MAHOGANY  
THE OCEAN REMAINED  
PRUSSIAN BLUE  
WHEN THE STARFISH  
FLUTTERED UPWARD  
AS SOUL-FILAMENTS  
RELEASED  
FROM UNDERSEA  
VOLCANOS  
THE MOON BECAME  
AN ELLIPSE  
BEFORE COLLAPSE  
THE FLAMES OF THE SUN  
FROZE  
WHEN ORPHEUS  
BEGAN HIS TURN  
TO HIS HORROR  
EURYDICE  
CONTINUED HER JOURNEY  
TOWARDS HIM  
KISSING DEATH

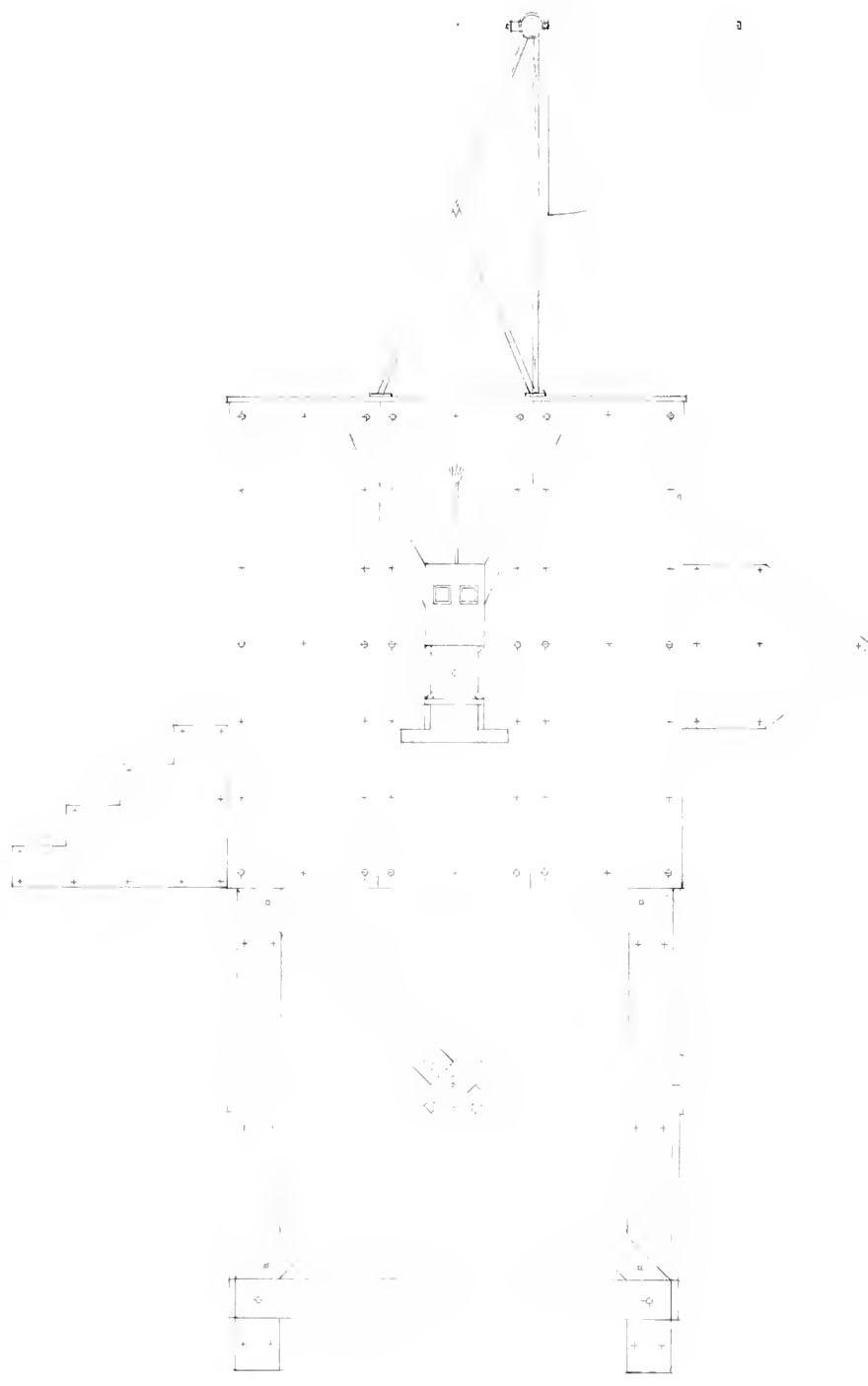
A SHUDDER RAN THROUGH  
THE WINGS OF THE ANGEL  
CAUSING THE AIR TO CHILL.





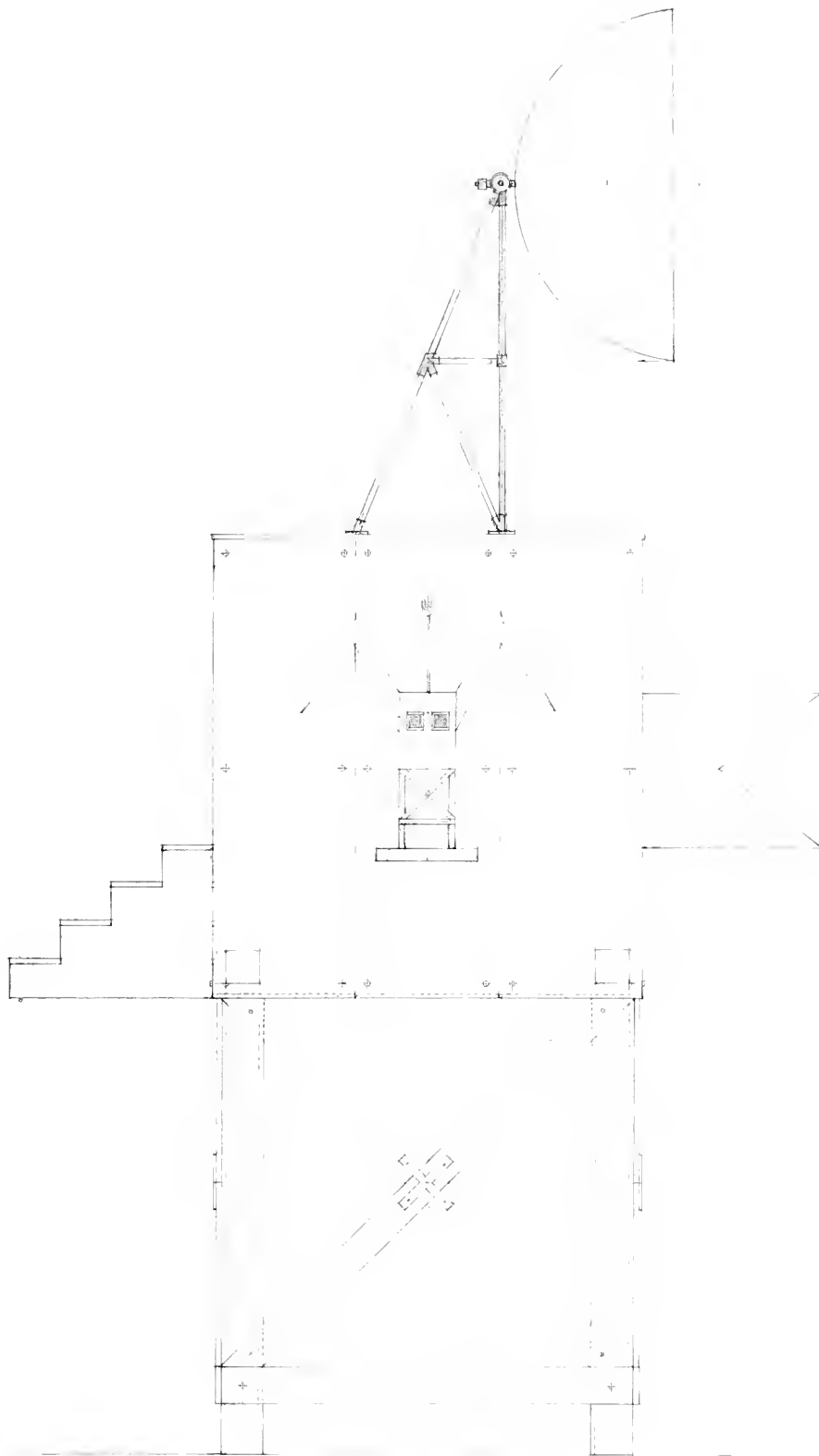
Preparatory drawings  
by John Hejduk for this project

John Hejduk



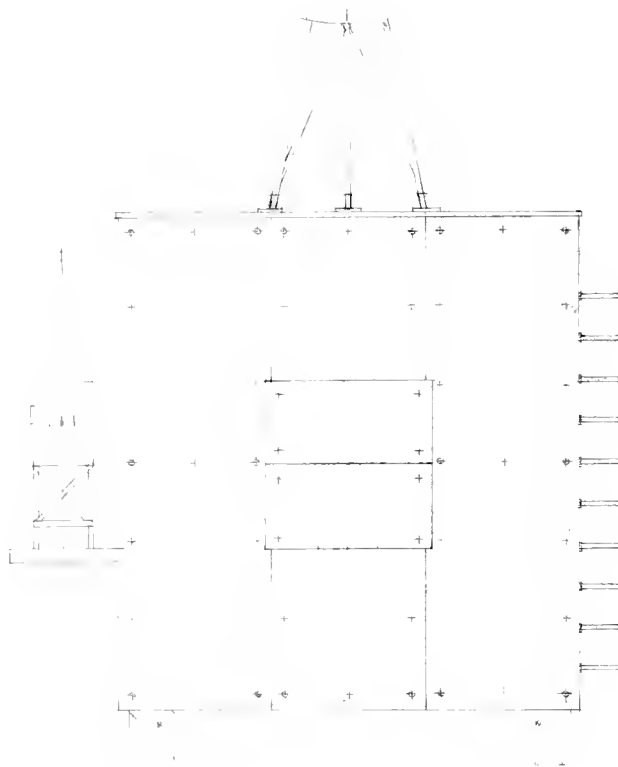
John H. H. H.





10m 10m

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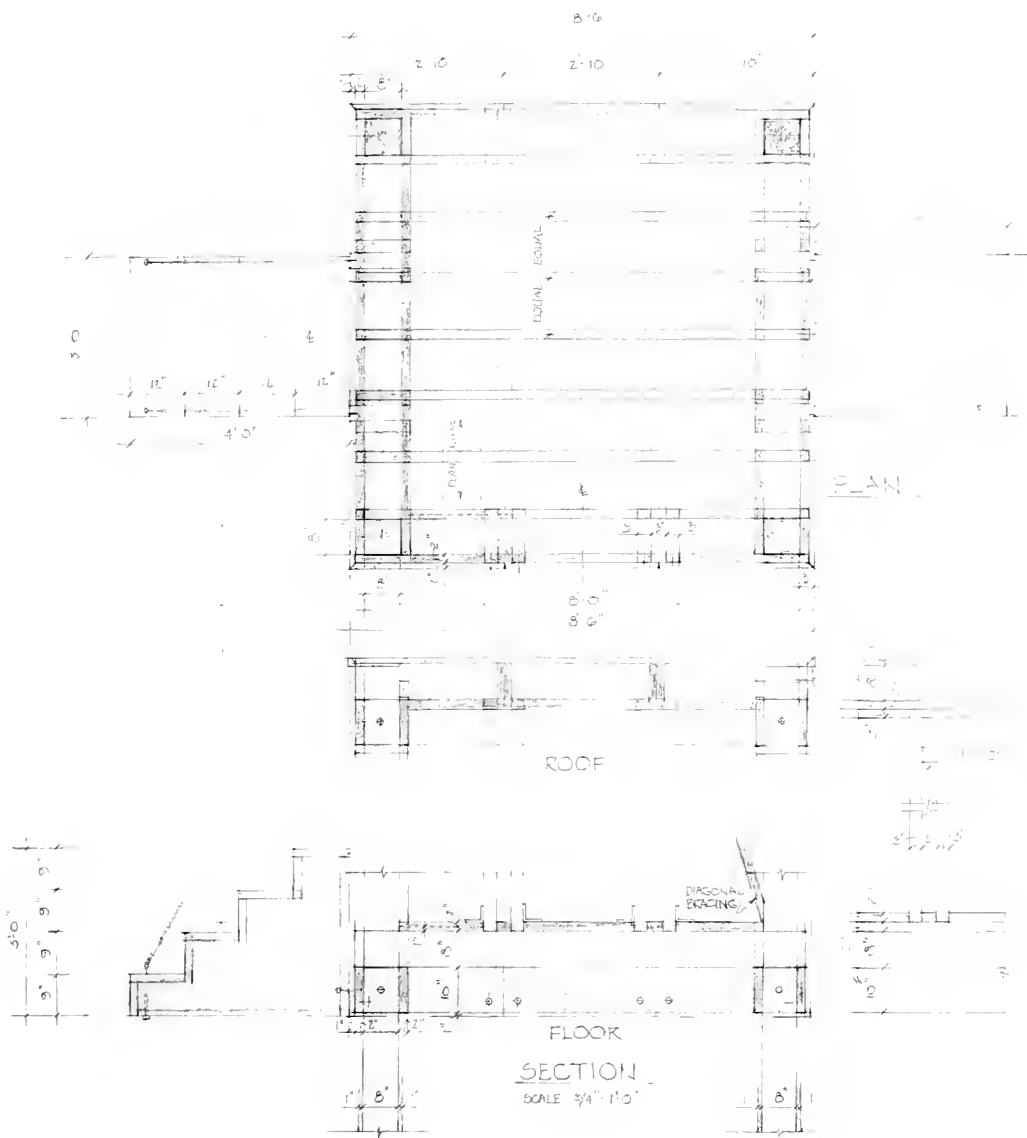


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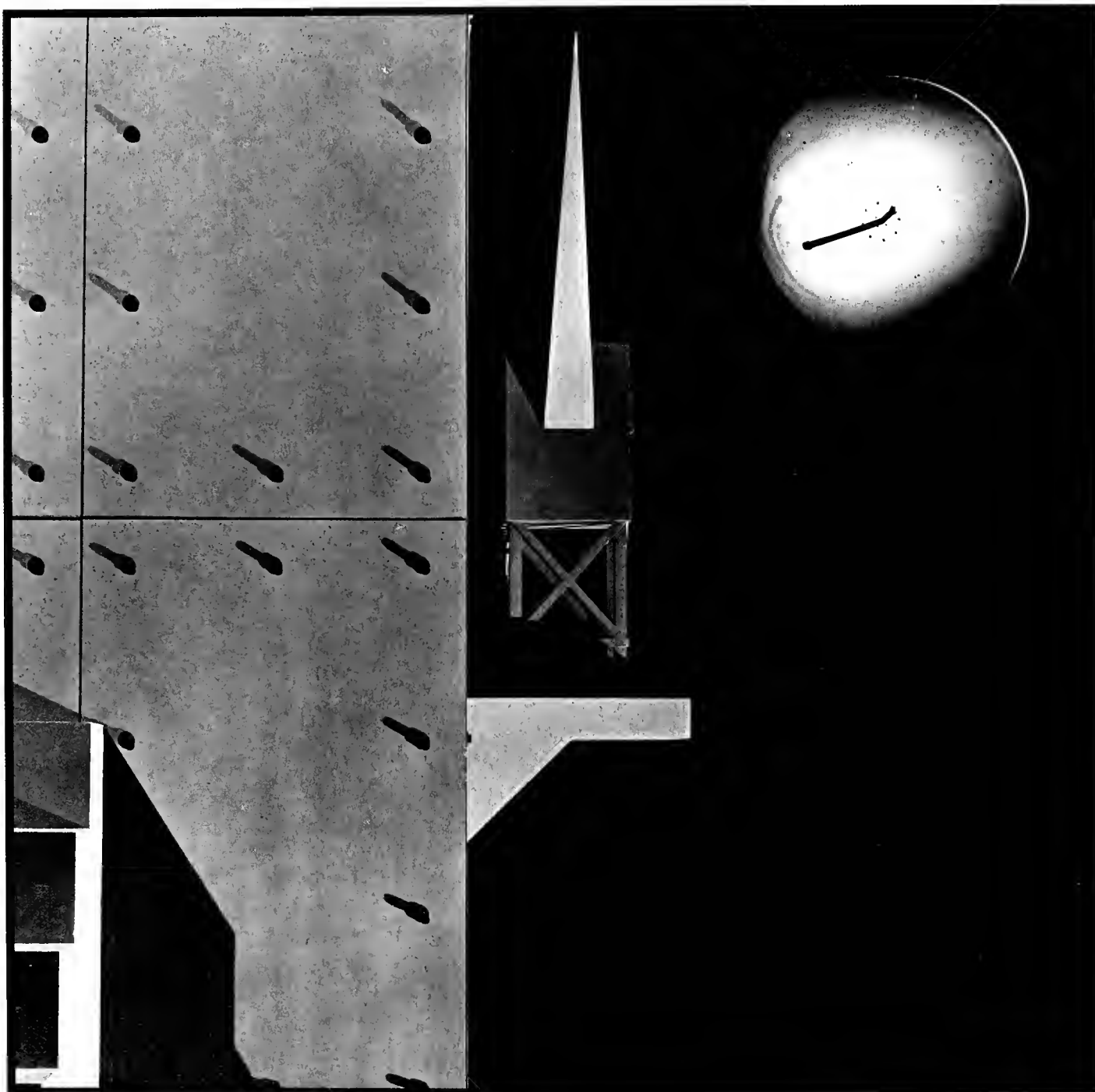
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*Photographs by Helene Binet*

## FOREWORD

**Eleni Cocordas**  
*Director of Exhibitions*

When we were in it—the process of building a part of *Riga* at The University of the Arts—, each of us had his job and knew exactly what had to be done. We were highly organized, methodical in our approach and labor. During my daily visits to The Great Hall during the summer and later, the fall of 1987 (the structures were fabricated in this campus space during the summer; one was partially assembled to check for fit and then dismantled; all parts were hauled away and stored in our sculpture studios; then all brought back again and finally erected in the week leading to the public opening in November), I was continually amazed by our architects and their students who were building the figures of Object and Subject. Of course they knew they had an enormous job on their hands against a non-negotiable deadline. But there seemed more to it than time. Perhaps it was an awareness of being part of something that could rightfully be termed historic: this was the first actual building based on the architect's then unpublished RIGA book; the first of the architect's special projects to be built in the United States; and all of this was happening in the center of Haviland Hall, an early 19th century building, itself conceived as utopian architecture. Or perhaps it was a unique inspiration, drawn from the privilege of intimacy. John Hejduk has been a visiting critic in our department of architectural studies and now, in turn, this small and select community was meeting a colleague and mentor in his Architecture. Whichever the case, these workers worked with an intensity and resolve that to me bordered on the ritual act of devotion.

In its step-by-step documentation of the process, this book is a tribute to these individuals and many others at The University of the Arts and The Cooper Union, who brought *Riga* to life. It is equally a tribute to the patrons—individuals, agencies, and corporations—who, through their understanding of the work's importance and faith in our purpose, contributed generous support in aid of this project.

One of the luxuries of producing this publication long after the completion of the project has been the ability to gather and record a measure of that which we, for all of our organization, could not have anticipated—the impact of *Riga* on audiences. Responses, beginning with the standing-room-only crowds that turned out for opening night and its related events, were many and significant. Some of the more formal intellectual and artistic reflections are here preserved, in a format that also has benefited from retrospection, and is intended to commemorate to readers the full range of our experiences.

Finally, this book is a gift to John Hejduk for that part of his gift that he shared with The University of the Arts and the public through *The Riga Project*.

## THE AEROPLANES AT RIGA

**Meton R. Gadelha**  
Architect in charge of  
Detailing and Construction

*"For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but  
I believe in order to understand. For this I believe—  
that unless I believe, I should not understand."*

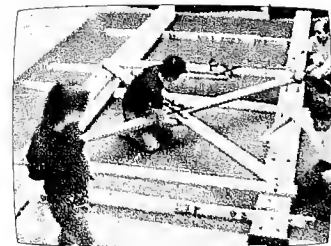
—St. Anselm (1033-1109), Proslogion 1

The announcement that in Riga there are aeroplanes in which you can fly over the city simultaneously filled us with courage and fear. Courage, because where there is action beyond our self assured control, things are generally done in ways that stir our need to use nerves. Fear—fear of the all undertaking; fear of the journey across the skies; fear of the pilot's lack of ability; fear of the machine. All expectations are false, all one's memories of Riga get completely mixed up with each other as soon as we get back home; they fade, and we cannot rely on them.

Courage, fear and mostly a story to be recounted when returning home take us to the sky above the lowland country facing the Baltic. We fly in a small aeroplane of real red, blue and yellow coloring.

### Work Schedule

*Phase II: Final  
assembly of  
Object/Subject  
in The Great Hall*



### Work Schedule

*Phase I: Fabricated from  
July 9 to August 8, 1987,  
by Ian Johnston and Peter  
Treuheit in the Sculpture  
Department's woodshop.*

#### July 9

558 cuts

#### July 10

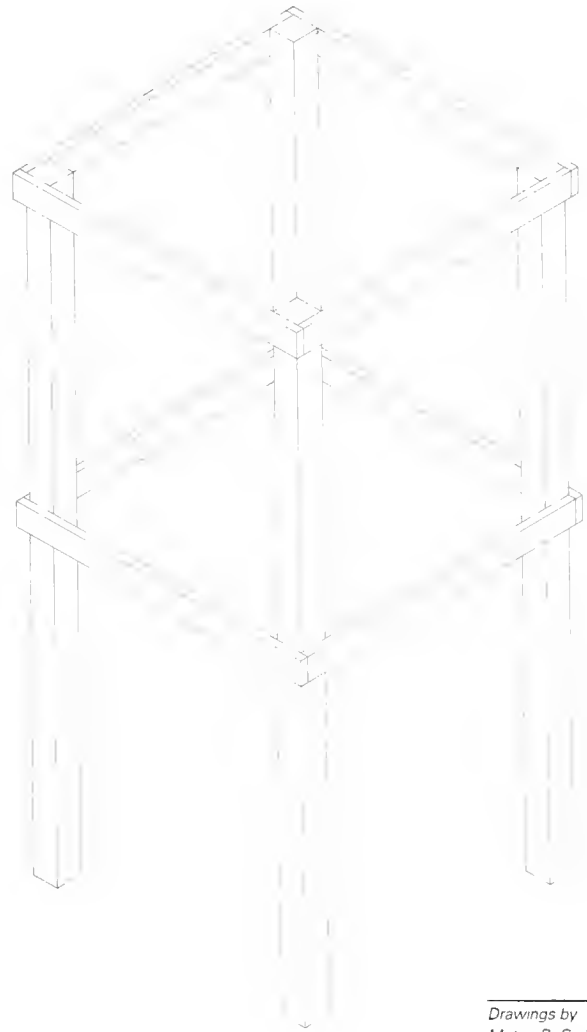
176 cuts  
sand 32 pieces  
prime 32 pieces x 2

#### July 11

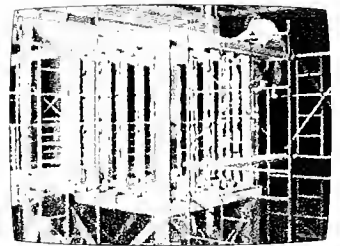
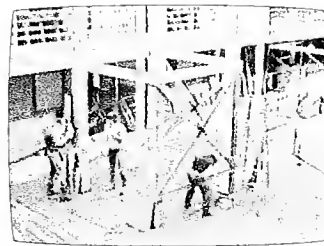
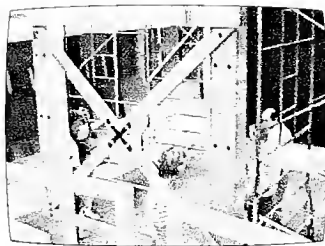
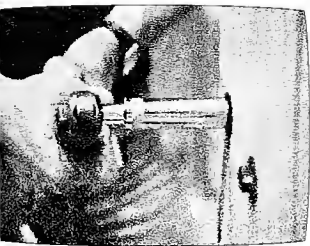
sand 32 pieces  
patch 32 pieces  
sand 32 pieces  
prime 244 pieces x 4

#### July 12

prime 96 pieces x 3  
32 cuts  
sand 16 pieces  
32 cuts  
fill 32 pieces  
fill 16 pieces  
sand 16 pieces



Drawings by  
Meton R. Gadelha



**July 13**  
patch 32 pieces  
sand 32 pieces  
32 cuts  
fill 32 pieces

**July 14**  
assemble 8 legs  
cut 32 braces  
cut 40 blocks  
drill 1320 holes  
install 1200 screws  
install 120 lag bolts

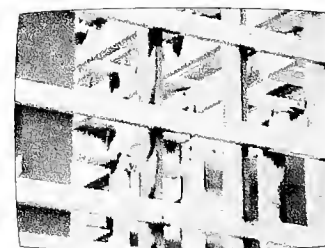
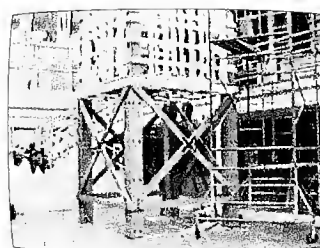
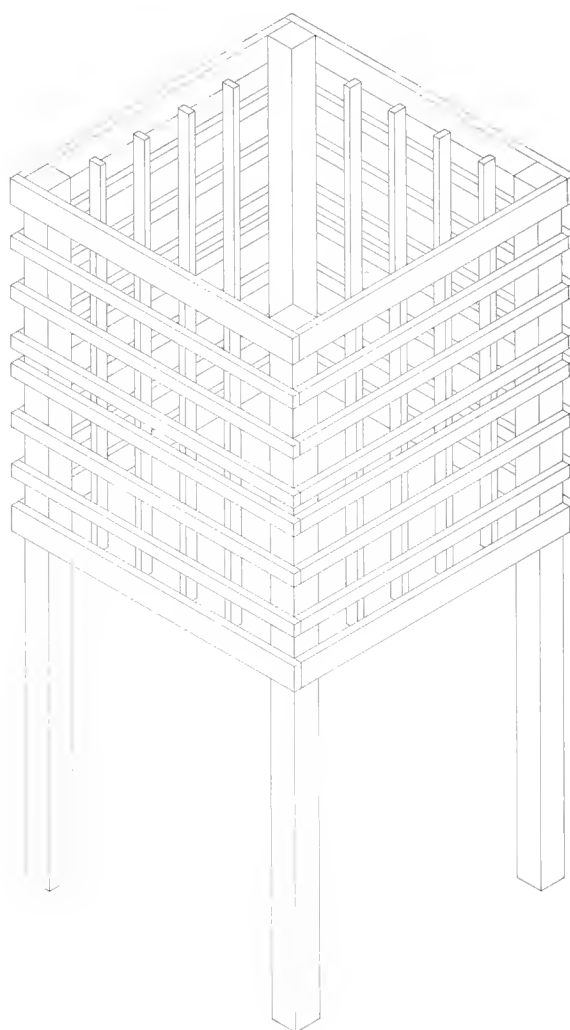
**July 15**  
226 cuts  
56 fills  
sand 30 pieces

**July 16**  
prime 56 pieces x 2  
prime 32 pieces x 2  
sand 56 pieces  
sand 32 pieces

**July 17**  
16 cuts  
fill 16 pieces  
sand 16 pieces  
prime 104 pieces x 3  
sand 104 pieces

There, in the sky far above the ground, what you see is not the same visual memories as when walking on the streets of the city. A strange, slow and irresistible transformation develops over Riga. A new series of buildings and structures take place inside and around the old ones, those in agreement with our earlier images of the city. This new architecture adapts itself easily to the existing one and brings over Riga a layer of mystery and silent words that dwell among its inhabitants. These buildings and structures tell us stories with phrases that challenge the laws on the making of man's surroundings.

The pilot looks over slowly in our direction, looks away from us in another direction, but his real view is into himself always. He is flying now, nothing is more natural for him. This feeling of naturalness, with the simultaneous, general feeling of the extraordinary that cannot be withheld from him, contributes to his manner. Surprise and disbelief that is revealed in our minds and faces give its place to the pilot's naturalness that the wind carries to us. As already too patient in expecting a question that does not come, he says, "This is the Riga Project, which can only be seen from here." This genuineness and the



#### July 18

prime 56 pieces  
sand 32 pieces  
fill 32 pieces  
sand 16 pieces  
fill 16 pieces  
prime 39 pieces  
prime 55 pieces

coat #1 24 pieces  
fill 48 pieces  
sand 48 pieces  
sand 24 pieces  
fill 24 pieces

#### July 19

coat #1 30 pieces  
sand 16 pieces  
paint 37 pieces  
paint 46 pieces  
sand 16 pieces  
sand 24 pieces  
fill 24 pieces  
sand 24 pieces  
paint edges 104 pieces

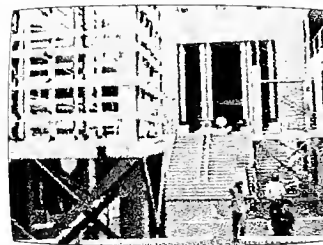
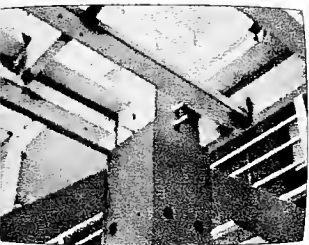
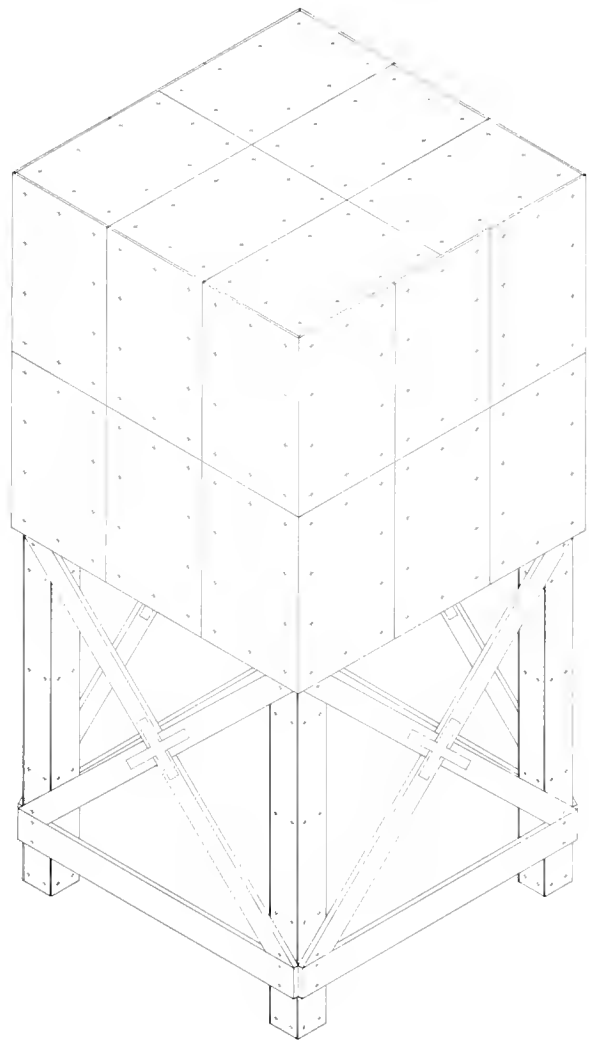
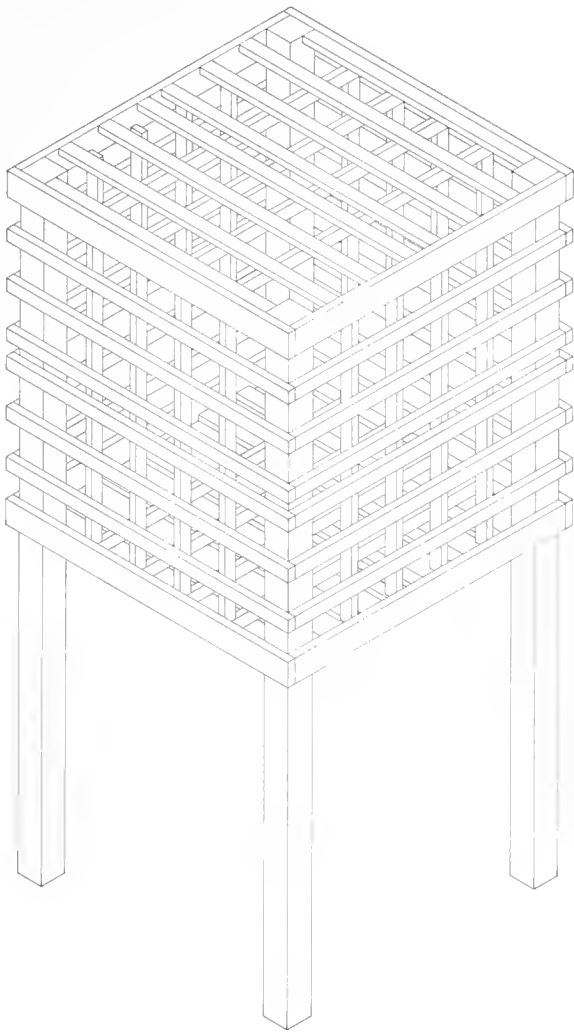
#### July 20

sand 32 pieces  
paint 44 pieces  
paint 44 pieces  
sand 72 pieces  
clean 72 pieces  
paint 46 pieces  
paint 46 pieces  
paint 24 pieces  
paint 24 pieces  
drill 240 holes for bolts

#### July 21

paint 16 pieces  
sand 16 pieces  
drill 320 marked holes  
sand 32 pieces  
cut 16 pieces  
fill 16 pieces  
sand 16 pieces  
prime 16 pieces





sand 16 pieces  
paint 32 pieces  
paint 36 pieces  
drill 160 marked holes  
paint 40 pieces  
paint 24 pieces  
drill 256 marked holes

**July 22**  
116 cuts—  
2" x 4" rough framing  
44 cuts—stairs  
6 cuts—brace  
drill 272 holes  
drill 160 countersink  
install 272 screws  
128 cuts

**July 23**  
50 cuts  
drill 520 holes  
drill 460 countersinks  
install 520 screws  
fill 700 holes

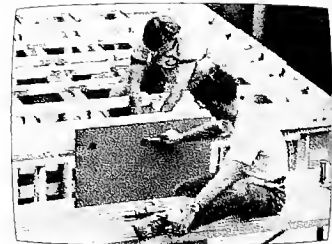
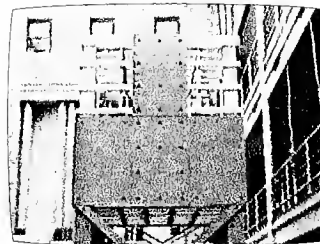
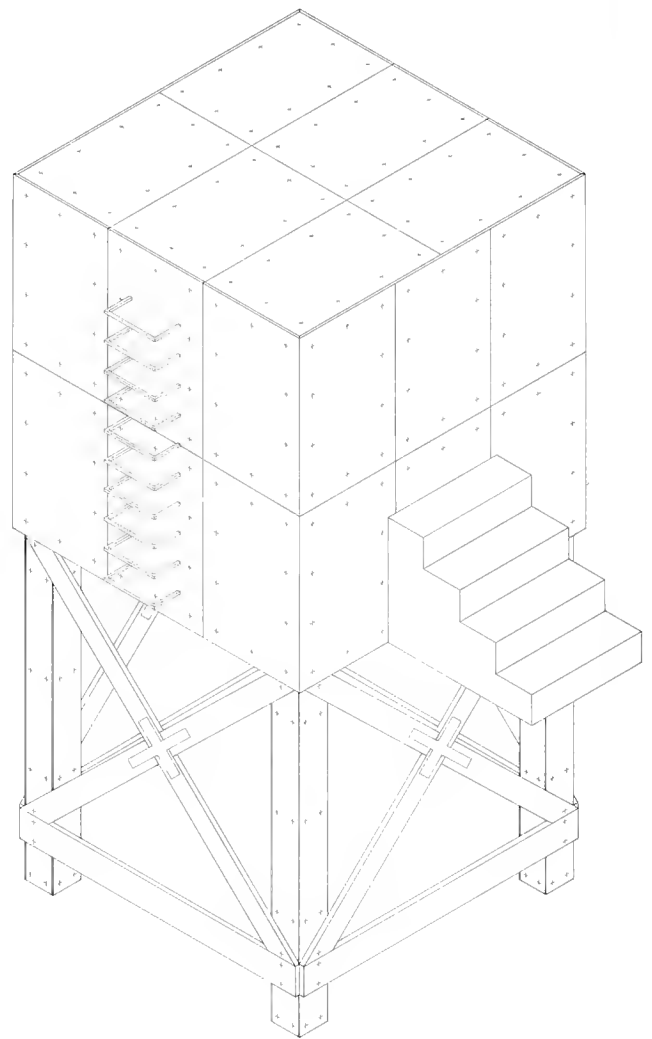
**July 24**  
sand stairs and noses  
fill stairs and noses  
sand stairs and noses  
fill stairs and noses  
paint 32 pieces  
paint 96 pieces

**July 25**  
drill 150 holes  
paint 96 pieces  
prime stairs and noses  
drill 320 holes—panels  
sand stairs and noses

mixed noise of the struggle between wind and machine fill the vacuum around and inside us, seeing things that we could not trust.

Now on the ground we search throughout the city in a frantic need to determine that what we saw from the sky can be seen on the streets of Riga. Our erratic walk takes us to the back of a building, a large one near the center of the old city. On the wall of the building there is a small poster: "The Riga Project—Subject-Object." In a moment we are inside of a great skylighted hall looking at two tall structures. We have already seen them, but from another place and at another time.

To look and walk around these two tall structures on a quiet afternoon, brings us a complex mixture of emotions not so removed from the pilot's naturalness. This naturalness equals the quiet sensation of reaching a place where architecture is beyond its role of being only a physical shelter for man. These two structures belong to the complementary side of the role of architecture, the one that we always forget: to shelter our dreams and the mystery of our presence here. In looking at the two structures we are certain that inside there is a part of ourselves.



#### July 26

prime stairs and noses  
sand stairs and noses  
paint stairs and noses  
drill 336 holes—panels  
paint 96 pieces

#### July 27

drill 304 holes—panels  
paint 96 pieces  
sand stairs and noses  
paint stairs and noses  
sand stairs and noses  
paint 88 pieces

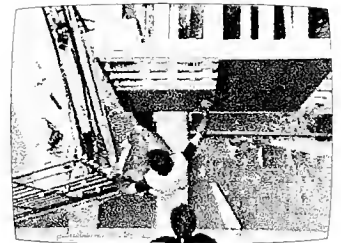
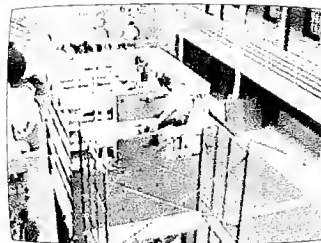
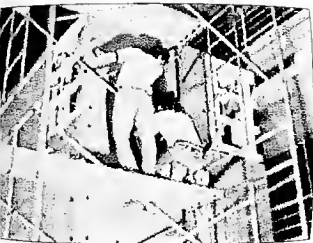
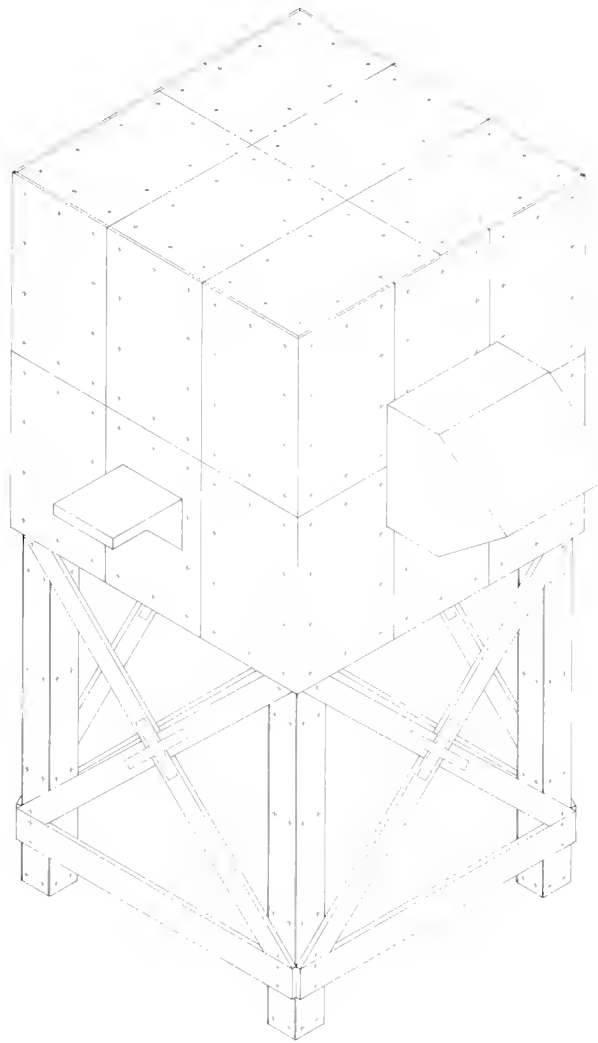
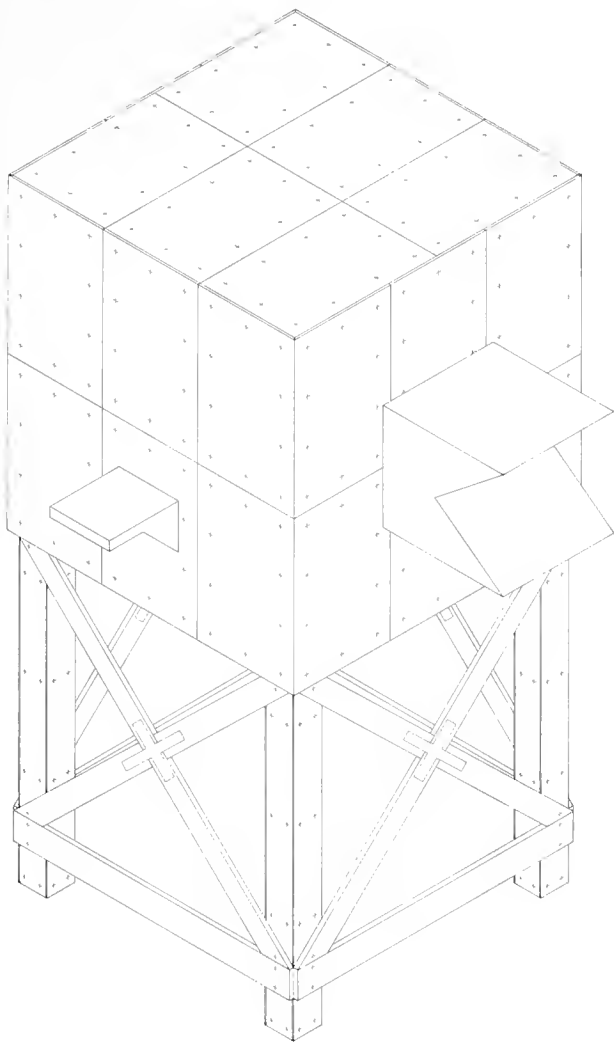
#### July 28

200 cuts  
200 holes drilled  
200 screws installed  
assemble braces on  
sculptures  
drill 48 holes  
drill 48 countersink

assemble 48 screws  
weld 32 pieces  
cut 64 metal pieces  
grind 128 welds  
sand 2 pedestals

#### July 29

belt sand 4 pieces  
fill and sand 2 pieces  
fill and sand 2 pieces  
laminate 12 pieces  
paint 8 pieces  
fill and sand 8 pieces



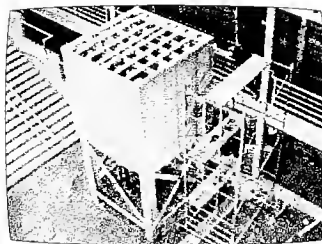
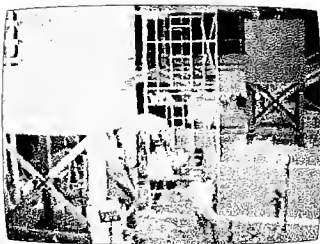
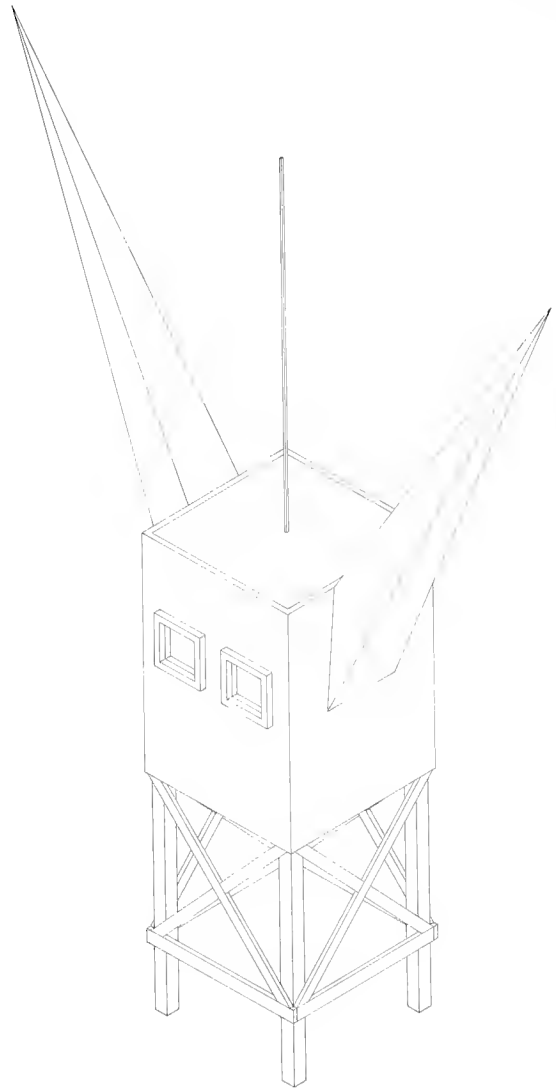
**July 30**  
80 cuts  
drill 60 holes  
sand 4 pieces

**July 31**  
sand and grind 16 metal  
braces  
fill 16 metal braces  
grind 16 metal braces  
sand and fill 16 metal braces  
sand and fill 4 pieces  
sand and fill 2 sculptures  
drill 16 holes  
insert 8 anchors  
drill 8 holes  
insert 6 anchors  
fill 8 holes

**August 1**  
prime 750 bolts  
paint 750 bolts  
paint 16 brackets x 2  
fill 16 brackets  
sand 16 brackets  
prime 16 brackets x 2  
paint 4 objects—  
noses and stairs

sand 4 objects—  
noses and stairs  
paint 2 objects—sculptures  
cut 60 pieces from  
copper pipe  
sand 60 pieces  
glue 40 joints  
prime 20 pieces  
paint 20 pieces  
sand 2 sculptures

paint 2 sculptures  
fill 2 panels  
drill 40 holes  
drill 40 holes  
cut 16 pieces  
drill 40 holes  
glue 16 pieces



#### **August 2**

paint 20 ladder pieces  
sand pedestals  
sand 8 pieces  
sand 6 pieces  
paint 24 pieces  
drill 32 holes  
drill 32 countersink  
ground 16 surfaces

ground 32 edges  
prime 16 pieces  
paint 16 pieces  
paint 750 bolts  
sand 16 brackets  
paint 16 brackets

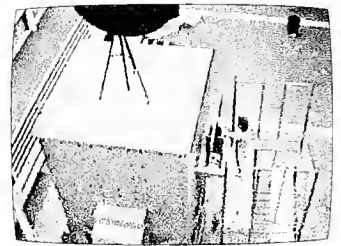
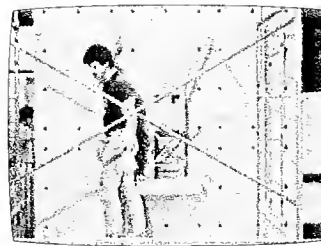
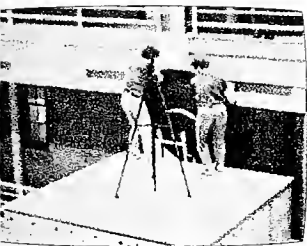
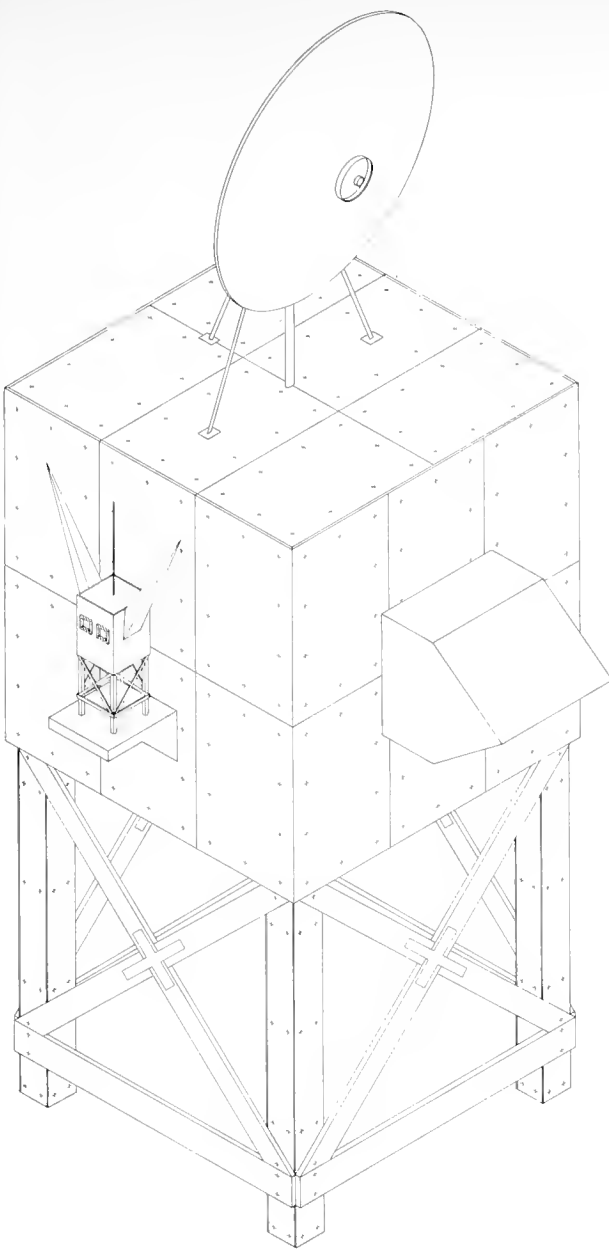
#### **August 3**

paint sculptures-6 pieces  
paint 20 ladder pieces  
paint 40 washers  
paint 8 plates  
sand 2 parts  
paint 2 parts  
drill 96 holes  
screw 96 screws  
drill 98 holes

insert 32 anchors  
drill 60 holes  
install 48 bolts  
install 96 bolts and washers  
drill 32 holes x 2  
install 32 bolts  
cut 24 pieces x 2

#### **August 4**

drill 96 holes  
screw 96 screws  
drill 98 holes  
insert 32 anchors  
drill 60 holes  
install 48 bolts  
install 96 bolts plus washers  
drill 32 holes x 2  
cut 24 pieces x 2  
drill 200 holes  
install 200 screws



#### **August 5**

Assemble grids  
drill 1400 holes x 2  
install 1400 screws  
paint metal base plate  
touch up 32 panels  
sand 32 panels  
paint 32 panels  
paint and primer 750 bolts  
paint and primer 750 washers

#### **August 6**

paint and mark 240 pieces x 2  
4 cuts  
24 cuts  
disassemble 1400 screws  
move all the lumber

#### **August 7**

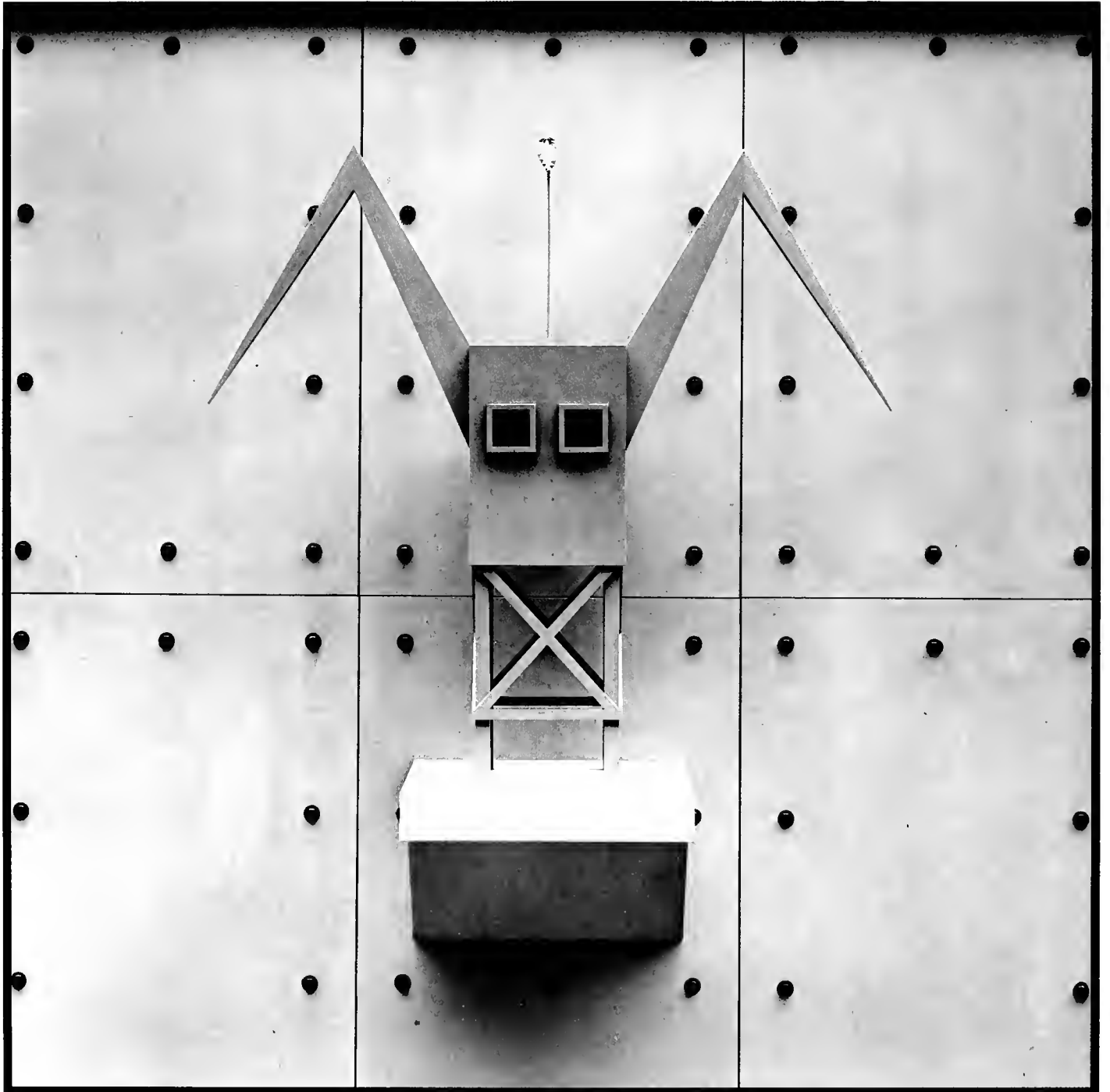
paint 8 pieces x 2  
paint 16 panels  
store panels  
move legs to storage  
bolt together 64 pairs  
of panels  
clean up  
paint 750 bolts  
64 cuts  
screw 200 screws

#### **August 8**

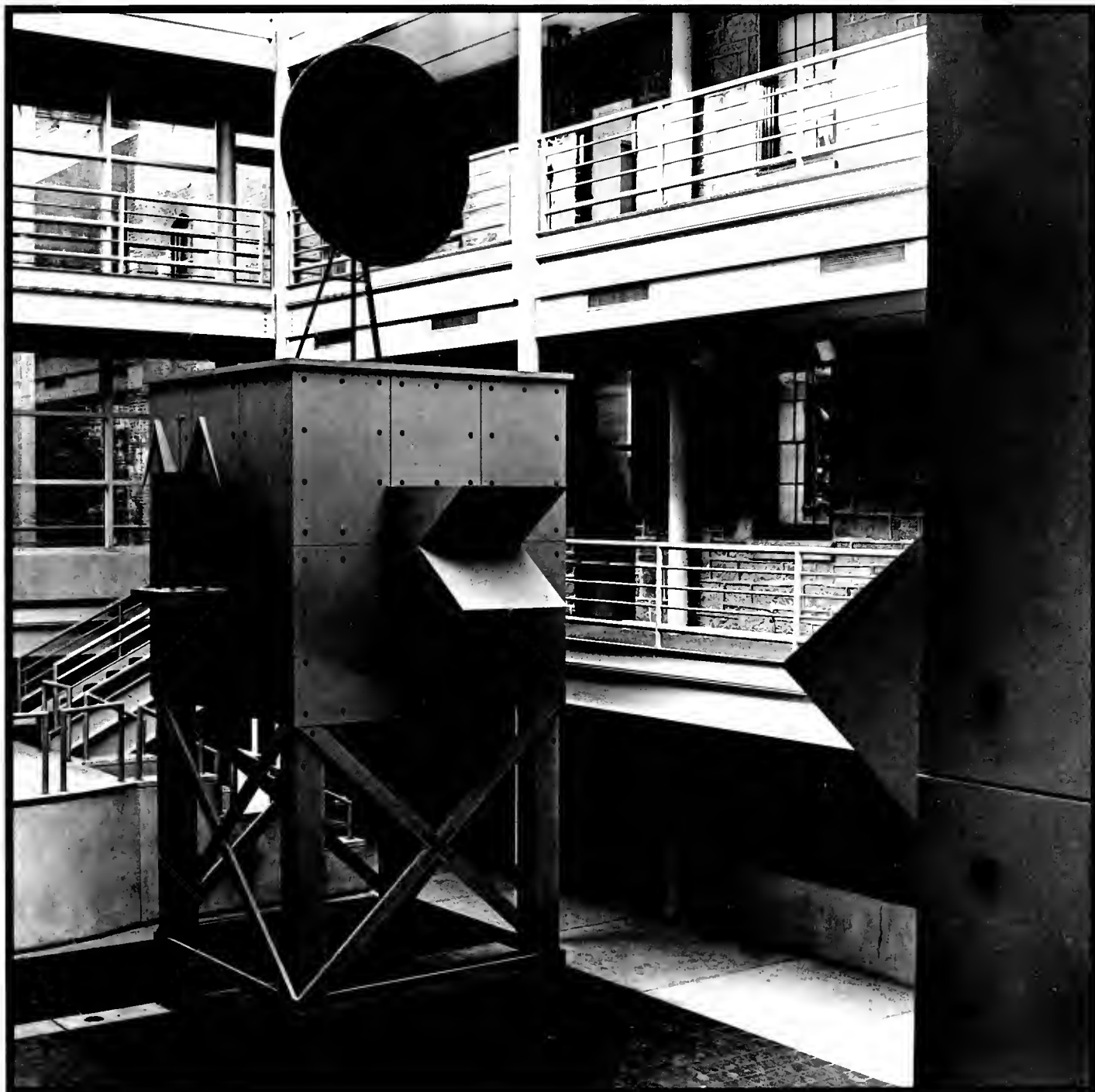
store sculptures  
store bolts  
paint 500 bolts  
paint 250 washers  
cut 8 sheets of masonite  
screw 100 screws  
paint 3 walls  
move 4 pieces to storage  
clean the wood shop











## JOHN HEJDUK: AN ARCHITECTURE OF REVELATION

Larry I. Mitnick

Chair, Department of Architectural Studies

*During the summer of 1985 John Hejduk and I spent two weeks teaching at the Internationale Sommerakademie Fur Bildende Kunst, Salzburg, Austria. In a way the idea for The Riga Project at The University of the Arts began there.*

*We spent each day teaching some two dozen students who had come from all over the world to study at the academy. Each day we rose up early and walked along the River Salzach crossing the Mozart Steg to the Festung Hohensburg. We spoke of remote things: Hitler's eagle's nest, the Holocaust, Mozart, Berlin, Goethe, Tanglewood, the paradox in Germanic culture, Rilke, narrative, marionettes, nutcrackers, clocks, funicular penetration. Hejduk spoke of three trilogies he had been working on as a North-East route from Italy to Berlin to Russia via Prague. In Venice there were: The 13 Watchtowers of Cannaregio, The New Town for the New Orthodox, The House for the Inhabitant Who Refused to Participate; in Berlin: Berlin Masque, Victims, Berlin Night; in Russia: Vladivostok, Lake Baikal, and Riga. Riga is located by the Baltic sea and is near another Holocaust site. All are sites with "undertones." By the end of the first three days the students were busy reading Rilke, analyzing Uccello's paintings, The Battles of San Romano, while receiving lectures and criticism from us. The students discovered the prophetic vision of Uccello, uncovering hidden secrets that lay within the work including the monsters of war and destruction. On the third day a very bright student who had been doing extremely well decided to leave rather suddenly; he left a note to Hejduk, declaring Hejduk to be the Devil himself. The next day we went to an Egon Schiele exhibition.*

*As we walked through St. Peter's Churchyard we were struck by the low northern light; an amber color filling in and giving off a glow or aura. Against such a light the silhouetted churchyard chapel projected its greenish gray (oxidized copper) shadow, catching the catacombs which lay at the periphery of the yard. As the student work progressed the air thickened and time was drawn out (each day seemed like a month). The temperature rose and the summer heat became unbearable. Towards the end of the first week we visited the St. Sebastian Cemetery; it was a courtyard surrounded by an arcaded promenade with the Wolf-Dietrich Mausoleum at the center—a most impressive silhouette—a grotesque head of enormous proportions. We entered the orifice and slipped along its cool inner skin; walls, floor and ceiling were completely covered by tile. We bathed in the cool liquid air. It seemed to spin—a totally modern building.*

*At the end of the first week, in the heat of the day, John decided to give a slide lecture in the Festung Hohensburg; The room was carved out of the more than 6' thick stone walls. Walls that on the exterior were grey, scarred, and full of wounds still open but no longer able to bleed. The interior walls were painted white and lit from below by fluorescent lights laying in the space between floor and walls. The lecture moved along rather lyrically with Hejduk giving the students a sense of his methodology. The projected images were from his sketchbook; silhouetted mythical animals, the Berlin project, subjects and objects, surrealist references and poetry. When Michelangelo's Bacchus appeared Hejduk seemed taken aback, he hesitated and exclaimed, "He breathes,"—a declared revelation. At that point there was a break, and I ran to open a small shutter to a window hoping to breathe air; I discovered just beyond the iron bars two doves nesting on the window sill. They were sitting together and seemed caged by the iron bars; my presence startled them and to my surprise they flew off leaving me in the confines of the chamber—caught in Hejduk's time—out of time. Somehow I knew I would go with him into Riga.*

### Riga: Object / Subject

The Riga structures are 27' high and approximately 9' x 9' square in plan. They are placed in opposite corners in a space 50' wide x 100' long x 50' high, The Great Hall of The University of the Arts. Each structure contains four supporting columns or legs, a cube subdivided into six panels per side, three means of vertical movement: a stairway, a ladder, and a small figure that seems to be flapping its wings in preparation for flight or landing, sitting on a shelf. The face of each cube contains a head piece, one with open mouth, the other with closed mouth. The four objects together form a 9 square organization. On top of each cube is a satellite dish, one concave and the other convex. The panels and the other structural members are bolted to the superstructure. They are accompanied by a black box that contains a video of David Shapiro reading his poetry, and on the night of the opening performance artist Connie Beckley presented a music/dance piece.

Hejduk's architecture developed along a path following his interest in painting and architecture, literature and architecture, and most recently the medical/biological/body and architecture. The Riga fabrications, like the Berlin fabrications are developed by a simultaneous moving back and forth between subject and object and the development of an accompanying narrative. In such a process subject becomes object and object becomes subject in an attempt to heal the Cartesian dichotomy. The process whereby consciousness attempts to come to terms with the world around it involves continuous negation; that is, continuous criticism and reconstruction of the knowledge of subject and object and of the relation to one another. The recognition of the conditional nature of knowledge, its partiality, does not lead to skepticism or relativism but to the preservation of each notion, view or perspective as a "moment of truth," embracing a cubist vision.

What Hejduk calls an "elliptical method" reminds us of Teilhard de Chardin's notion of creation: "On a phenomenal plane, each being is constructed like an ellipse on two conjugate foci: a focus of materialization and a focus of psychic centering—the two foci varying solidarily and in the same sense." What is particularly fascinating about the methodology is that the content of the work, while being completely dependent on the subject matter, does not lie in the subject matter but in the locating and location of the symbol. The symbol is present not as a representation but by an evocation. It is revealed over time in a dynamic way as the "aura of meaning" or as a "numinous aura." The symbol is the result of a self-referential resonance between its elements. The elements of the fabrications are taken from the world as experienced by Hejduk and as a result the work is not an attempt at a recovery of origins in an anthropological sense, but in a phenomenological manner, to find in the world the presence of myth. Symbols may be understood as the core of myths and rites. They are polyvalent and multivocal and are unlike signs which refer to one specific meaning. Signs "work," but symbols are lived and are reinterpreted. The symbolic is at once opaque and through its multiplicity becomes transparent. Hejduk's work points to a restoration of symbol as an instrument of knowledge above and beyond reasoning, and the recognition of man as being homo-symbolicus. The symbol always points to a reality or a situation concerning human existence, and in this way it is a "window on the world."

In another sense, by building each fabrication as a one of a kind, uniquely crafted ritual—one in which its very possibility is dependent on where it is, and on a leap of faith by those who are there to make it at the time, Hejduk sustains the aura and authenticity of the objects created. The compulsion to level, or as Benjamin has

stated, "the desire of contemporary masses to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly" and "to pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura, is the mark of a perception whose 'sense of the universal equality of things' has increased to such a degree that it extracts it even from a unique object by means of reproduction." Hejduk tries to maintain "the aura of the latter as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be." The fabrications will be dismantled and relocated to another place and time, or will simply disappear. In the end what mattered, to continue Benjamin's insights, is "their existence, not their being viewed."

In many ways the two fabrications present themselves as enigma, defying closure and are a form of open or plural text. Thematic synthesis is possible but is not singular and as a result we cannot decide on the name. The title *Object/Subject* opens up the first and most important distinction in philosophy, that is, they embody the original antithesis in consciousness of self and not-self; it also indicates more a method rather than a real naming. They were in fact originally named two lawyers: defender/prosecutor and were consequently named, unnamed and renamed by those viewing the pieces. One faculty member who was a prisoner of war during World War II believed the fabrications to be watchtowers of his Nazi captors. Others saw them as a fragment of an urban roofscape. They are a "tireless approximation" and resist naming. One senses in Hejduk's work a resistance to consume; one cannot name it and therefore cannot consume it. It cannot have a single meaning; it asks of its readers to participate in the production of the text, in the "writerly." One cannot reject it or accept it; one can only participate in the liminal reality of the text itself, a ritual of rereading over time.

The enigma is set in motion by a diachronic structure: object/subject, male/female, up/down, in/out, metal/wood, high tech/folk art and others. Through the diachronic Hejduk safeguards the multiplicity of meanings, the polysemic, and prevents total collapse into metonymic disorder. The antithesis is a major rhetorical device that sustains the symbolic. The space between the two fabrications is the wall of the antithesis, and Hejduk in accepting the wall accepts our fallen condition. The *coincidentia oppositorum*, the reunion of opposites, the totalization of fragments, is cut off from himself; it is totally Other. However, this spiritual androgynization is present by its very absence. We are haunted by the very possibility.

The fabrications are on a certain level figurative and, as in some of the work of Picasso, they are a result of an inventory of parts that accumulates in order to totalize. They accumulate yet remain reductive. They appear first as mythical animals with satellite dishes on their backs, one with mouth open, the other with mouth closed. They change scale and the satellite dishes read as heads and the above-mentioned heads read as sexual organs. This same scale change occurs with the baby animals or soul-birds; the soul-birds may be read as having two eyes with a flowering element (*Dionaea museipula* or venus flytrap) on its cap, or a head extended with two voided breasts. The two soul-birds produce a second narrative by a "nesting." The two babies are what the two structures are not and suggest a relationship of earth to sky, death to birth, a symbiotic relationship of parent to child, a parasitic relationship of scavenger to victim. In a way the two figures or two sets of figures may be seen as twins. They are two aspects of the same thing and in this sense they suggest the hermaphrodite or the androgynous or the mystery of totality that forms an integral part of the human drama. By assigning to the female and to the male an equivalent value, however, Hejduk recognizes the role the female must play in Architecture: "There is the breath of the male

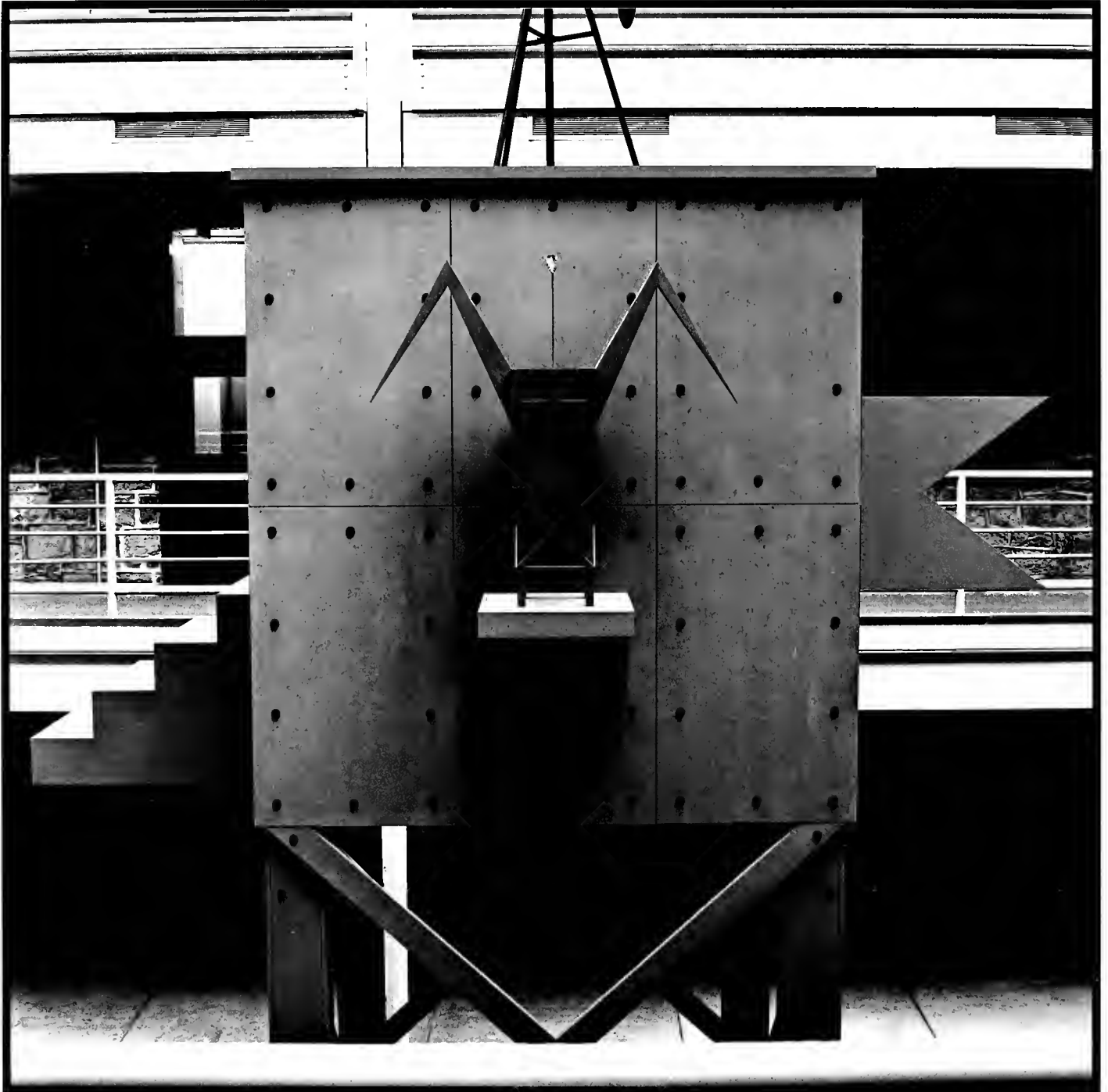
and the breath of the female and we have yet to breathe in fully the breath of the woman and her thought in Architecture."

The fabrications are by their very nature unnatural combinations. They remind one of the monsters found on many maps and engravings charting the New World. These monsters were made from unusual combinations of existing animal forms. They were both terrifying warnings of impending death or, worse, torture by savages, as well as signposts for a possible future. These images also appeared in the margins suggesting a status common to figures in transition or in the in-between. Such images often try to establish an idea of *communitas*. For example, gargoyles were used to mark boundaries, at the facade of churches, at public squares and at gates where exchanges were made. Jesters and jokers, dwarfs and clowns representing the poor or deformed class and having a structurally inferior or marginal position in society were in opposition to the authorities and the power of controlled consensus in the social structure. They, however, were obvious reminders of the nature of the human condition. Put rather directly by Hejduk, "there is more room in the margins." Here, in the margins, the existing definitions of reality are questioned. After all, the shores of the New World offered the possibility of alternate life styles, new political and social structures. There are few restraints upon reformulating and recombining accepted terms and custom, where cultural creativity is therefore at its most intense. It is especially in the freedom of liminality that new metaphors are born, revisions of the social structure are first attempted, and creative insights are developed.

Finally, these fabrications are poetic insights, revelations of a mature, self-assured architect whose life's work is as much about itself as it is about the time in which it was made. It is an accumulation over and through time and yet it remains reductive. The relentless opacity ramifies with age yielding a transparency; life embeds itself in the child. It takes time.

".....You must have memories of many nights of love, each one different from all the others, memories of women screaming in labor, and of light, pale, sleeping girls who have just given birth and are closing again. But you must also have been beside the dying, must have sat beside the dead in the room with the open window and scattered noises. And it is not yet enough to have memories. You must be able to forget them when they are many, and you must have the immense patience to wait until they return. For the memories themselves are not important. Only when they have changed into our very blood, into glance and gesture, and are nameless, no longer to be distinguished from ourselves—then can it happen that in some very rare hour the first word of a poem arises in their midst and goes forth from them." —*Rilke (For the Sake of a Poem)*.

The work, as revelation, not only shows Hejduk's but man's daily life as a perpetual revelation of his inner self. By such an unveiling Hejduk lays open, inviting inspection, and reawakening in all of us, a call for passion in our doing, discovery in our making and authenticity in our being. Hejduk's work is and will continue to be a source of enlightenment for those who have the courage and vision to understand.

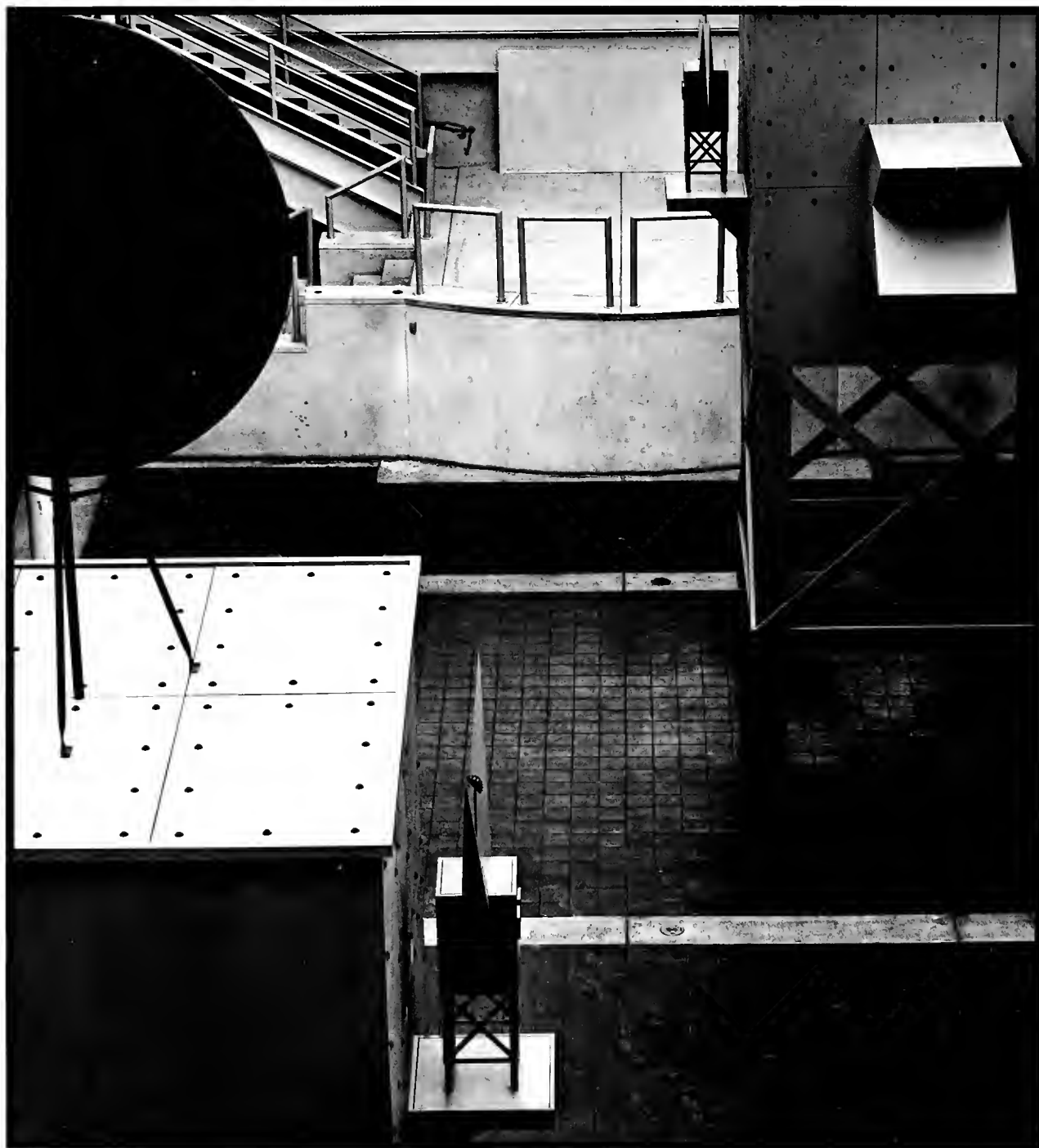














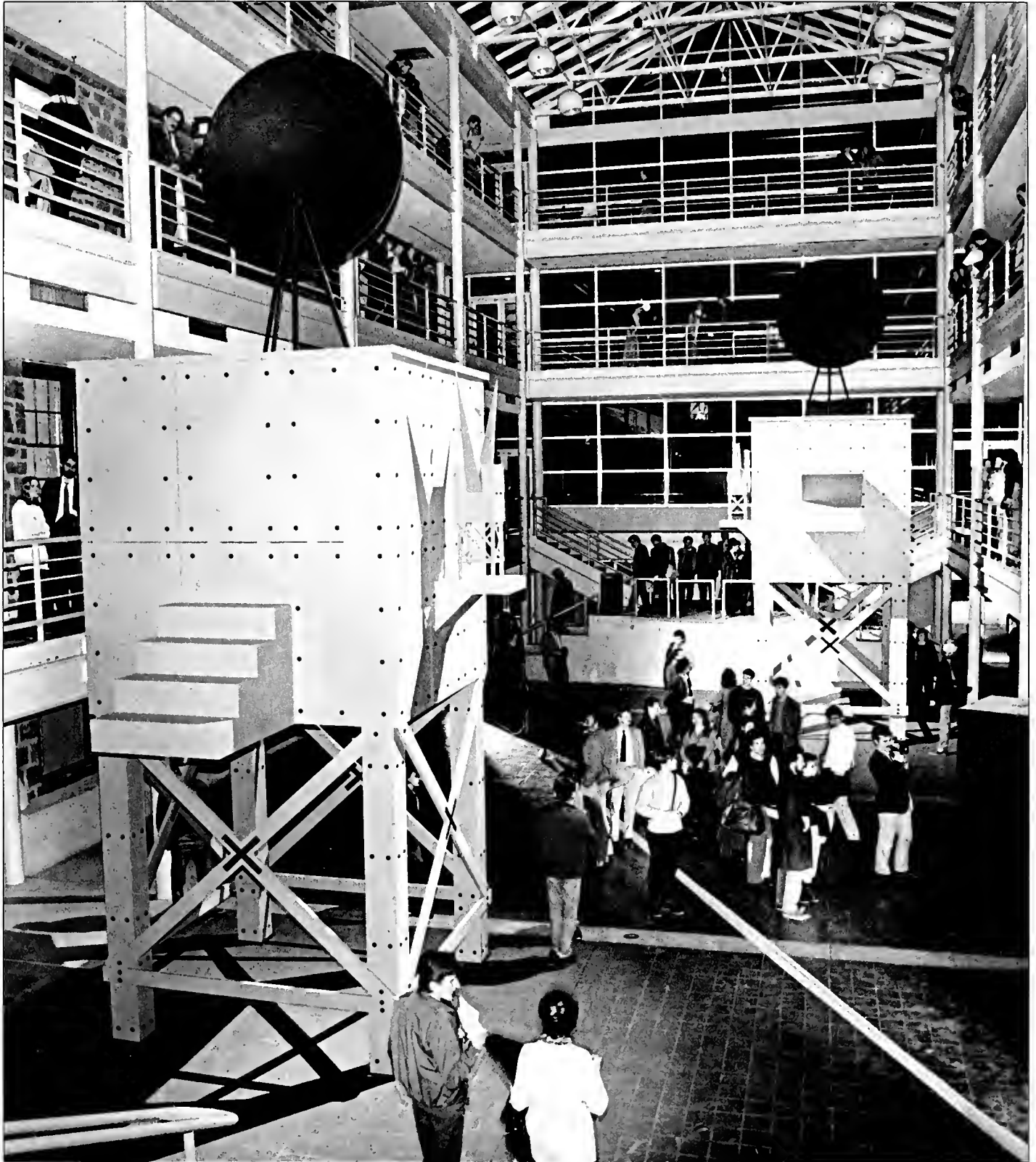




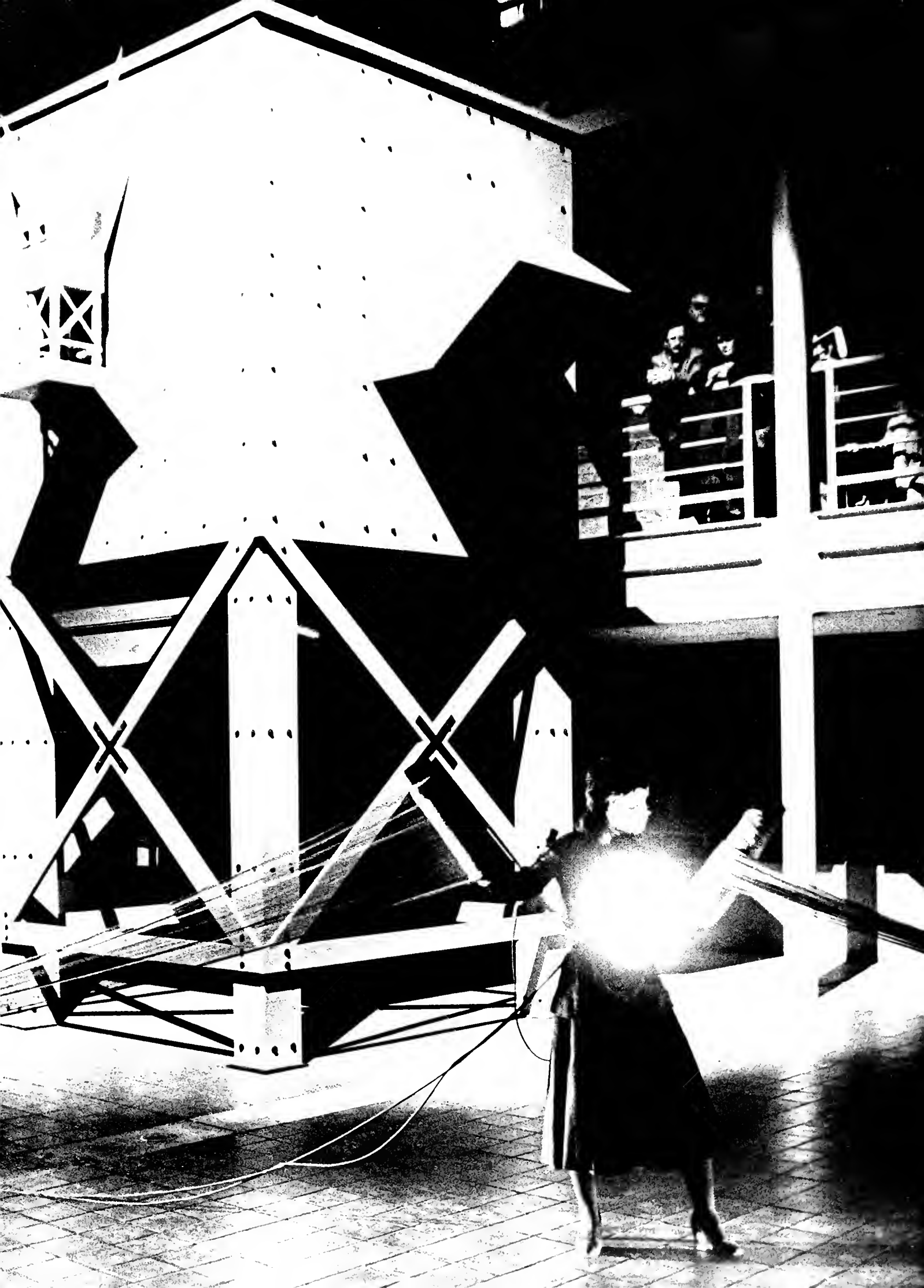
*The public opening of The Riga Project on Thursday, November 19, 1987, began with a poetry reading by John Hejduk*

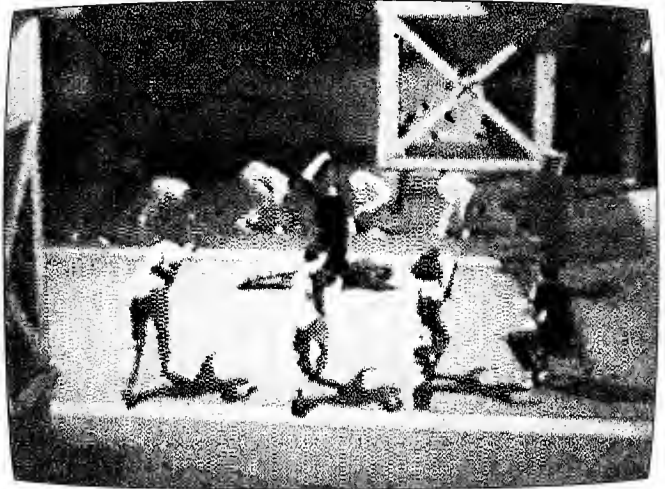


*The Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, main gallery at The University of the Arts, presented the RIGA book in its entirety, and other works by John Hejduk including books VLADIVOSTOK and LAKE BAIKAL, drawings and models for earlier projects BERLIN MASOUE and LANCASTER/HANOVER*



*A view of Object/Subject  
in The Great Hall on  
opening night, looking west*





*In December 1987, students from The University of the Arts School of Dance performed *The Fall of Guilt*, a response to The Riga Project conceived and choreographed by Associate Professor Manfred Fischbeck. (above)*

*On opening night, Connie Beckley performed *Crooked Lightning*, named after one of David Shapiro's poems and dedicated to John Hejduk's Riga Project. (left)*

## THE BLANK WALL

poems by  
David Shapiro

"The blank wall is on its way to becoming (sic)  
The dominant feature of U.S. downtowns  
These are not inadvertent blank walls. These  
Walls were meant to be blank." It wasn't a letter,  
It was your life; I delivered it in light rain  
To the Architectural League. I am amazed at the  
Blank wall, it is so expensive, as others  
Are amazed that they have brought back the blank wall.  
"Oh, the blank wall is so terrible." The grace notes  
Strike against it. She is not feeling much,  
The blank wall. With beaded bubbles winking on  
The blank wall. This happened once to a colossal  
Vault of sexual objects in indeterminate cast.  
Careless curators, oxymoronically engaged.  
The grave stone has a name, it says "Name."  
Ah, Hamlet was fat and the jump into the grave  
And the temper tantrum, for example,  
Will not work. It does not dissolve  
The blank or minister to nonangels in the mood  
Of sulking brother. Dark, dark, dark, you may  
All jump into the dark in a mania of lack  
Of doubt. Dark, blank wall, we will stay beside you  
And try to learn the lesson without the teacher.  
There is nothing behind the blank wall, not even the  
broken cup.



*David Shapiro read some of his poetry on  
the opening night of The Riga Project  
A video of one of his poetry readings.  
House (Blown Apart), installed nearby  
Object/Subject in The Great Hall, was on  
view for the duration of the project.*

## HOUSE (BLOWN APART)

I can see the traces of old work  
Embedded in this page, like your bed  
Within a bed. My old desire to live!  
My new desire to understand material, raw  
Material as if you were a house without windows  
A red stain. Gold becomes cardboard.  
The earth grows rare and cheap as a street.  
Higher up a bird of prey affectionate in bright gray  
travels without purpose.  
I beg you to speak with a recognizable accent  
As the roof bashed in for acoustics  
Already moans. What is not a model  
Is blown into bits in this mature breeze.  
If students visit for signs  
Or signatures we would discuss traces.  
We would examine each other for doubts.  
Old work we might parody as an homage  
Losing after all the very idea of parody.  
Traces of this morning's work are embedded in this page.



## THE CUP IN ARCHITECTURE

There is the cup, and there is the broken cup,  
And there is trouble in the broken cup.  
Or is there trouble with the broken cup?  
Is there a collaborative plot, and is there glue?  
They have begun repair too soon,  
Like details of an eyelid in father's clay,  
Details prepared for a death mask of a city.

It is the cup of a psychotic doctor  
On a "talk Show" who "acts out"  
And puts his feet in the lap of the host  
And knocks over the cup without apology.  
It is the cup as apology, and the cup without doubts.  
It criticizes your work and its simplicity  
Because it is evident the cup is finite now  
And you had arranged to forget its nomad margins.

In the middle of the country lies a broken university  
And there they think of the cup  
And its analogies. As the cup to the difficult test  
So our broken music and what we think and may  
Not think. I ask you to paint the cup  
A grave, a cartoon character, and the night sky.  
But you have the idea as friend  
And certainty is lying there, like a broken cup.  
And the lover says Break it, as you broke us.

One has drawn a lozenge in space, shattering  
All pastels and later tilting in a more regular  
Horizon. You note the archaic horizon  
And accuse the present of a lying fold.  
Secret waves are breaking: abundance, enigram.

I show you the book of Rome: a shriveled  
Shell. Embarrassed by pictures,  
Clutching at the models like ledges, I ask  
Questions about tea: Would you choose  
Of the cup, tea or expensive clothes-say  
In prison? The laws are insults, insults prisons.  
What are you thinking of that is not the broken cup?  
We who consume the word, not the elixir.  
There must be thirst for the broken cup.

The cup is buried alive, in sand.  
The person knocked in the head with wine.  
We know or might know now, says the dream,  
That such a blow kills the person and keeps  
The juices from flowing to the brain.  
Nor will children repair it again, like a mother.

You have written in the shape of a house.  
Your brother romps in mud outside.  
Inside, the sadistic night-calls.  
With death a normal life resumes.  
The cup lies on the pavement, in stars and stone.

On the road home, you cure a lame old man and give  
him a house.



## JOHN HEJDUK

John Hejduk is an architect and educator living and working in New York City. He has been the Dean of The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture of The Cooper Union since 1975 where he has been teaching since 1964. He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and of the Royal Society of Arts. His work has been exhibited in New York, London, Amsterdam, Paris, Tokyo, Athens, Milan, Oslo and Berlin. In 1980 he received a Brunner Grant from the New York Chapter/American Institute of Architects; in 1983 he received a Design Arts Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts; in 1986 he received the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; in 1988 he received the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture/American Institute of Architects Topaz Medallion for Excellence in Architecture Education and the New York Chapter/American Institute of Architects Medal of Honor for Distinction in the Profession. Rizzoli International Publications published MASK OF MEDUSA (his work of the past thirty-six years) in 1985, BOVISA (one of his Milan Triennale projects) in 1987 and VLADIVOSTOK (his Russian Trilogy) in 1989. VICTIMS and COLLAPSE OF TIME have been published by the Architectural Association in 1986 and 1987 respectively. Structures from his projects have been built at the Gropius Bau (Berlin), the Architectural Association (London), The University of the Arts (Philadelphia), The Oslo School of Architecture (Norway), and Georgia Institute of Technology (presently under construction). Buildings from his award-winning projects have been constructed in Berlin under the auspices of the Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin.





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